

that all could understand. Verse recitations and narra-
 tions of divine stories became common features of
 village life. Not many people knew reading and
 writing but the number of people who heard these
 recitations and stories and enjoyed good literature and
 got into touch with the best thought of the time was
 larger than we ordinarily imagine. We shall not be
 far wrong if we say that the number of people who
 enjoyed such good poetry as there existed far
 was larger in those untaught times than in
 these days of
 so-called universal education.

The centuries of eventful history, of literary and
 artistic activity, and of propaganda have impressed
 themselves on the minds of the people and left marks
 in the form of many a tradition and belief. The
 sum total of these is what determines the people's
 attitude in life and may be called popular culture. It
 may not be possible to describe this culture or this
 attitude in a few clear words but that they are there
 is evident to whoever looks on that life. Foreigners
 indeed have in the recent past found not much good
 in the social customs and manner of life of the country.
 The fault in these cases is however not so much
 in the life that was seen as in the eye that saw: a
 critic like the Abbe Dubois who starts with the con-
 viction that he is looking on a barbaric society sees
 only those features of its life that confirm his convic-

tion. If one like Fa-Hien should come
and look at
it with reverence, he sees only the
features that can
edify him. The truth,, as in most cases of
this land,
lies somewhere between. Each society
develops the
institutions which it thinks will best
embody its ideas